

Teachings From Ephesians 5

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Date: 29 September 2024

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[0 : 00] Thank you for your prayers and for being here this morning. It's been a blessing to be here. I'm glad to see everyone back. Everyone's here, I think, except James and Carol aren't here yet, but glad that you made it, Joe, all those miles, you and your family.

Good to see you, Chuck. Thank you for coming. And everyone else that's here as well. I appreciated the children's lesson about God's love and what we heard there.

What a beautiful row of children, too. Our children bench is growing and overflowing, partly due to mics coming here, right? But it's such a blessing to have our children here with us.

The past few weeks I've been just thinking about the confusion that wants to come into Christianity, and especially as I've been around different people, different types of people lately.

[1 : 14] Some that are perhaps very religious, very much set in their ways of maybe hundreds of years of this is how things are done, and just different religious groups, conversations that I've had.

And then also some that have left those groups and are on the other, maybe the other extreme of that pendulum of, of, you know, just living unrighteously in some ways, and just loose living.

And then you go, well, what's the right way? God, how should we live? And the only thing that I keep coming back to is that we have to go back to the Bible.

We have to stand on the Word of God and say, God, what do you say about this? The Word never changes, and I'm so thankful for that this morning, that it's solid and it's something that we can hang on to and we can go forward and we don't have to be swayed with every wind of doctrine that comes our way.

Are we a Bible-believing Christian this morning? You know, not just a, quote, Christian, because I said I am, but because I live the Bible and I want to know the truth.

[2 : 46] I love the truth, and I want to know the Bible, the whole Bible, not just we want to be obedient to what we know, right? We don't just say, well, here's the verse that I stand on, but yeah, that's not, that chapter's not for me over there.

But are we open to the Word of God and what it teaches us? And in that, do we remember who we are? I think it's very important.

I've been thinking that through all this, these last few weeks. Do I remember who I am? Do you know who you are? You might have to define that.

You know, if you ask, well, who are you, Ethan? You say, well, I'm one of Dan Goods' sons, right? But who are we really? Who do we belong to?

Who is our Father? And are we His? Is He ours? Is Jesus our brother? Is He our Savior? Is He our Lord?

[3 : 50] That's who we are. That's who we really are. We are either His or we're not. And if we're His, we need to remember as we go through life that, like Paul said, I'm not my own.

I've been bought with a price. I belong to somebody. That's who we are. Is that where we get our direction? We have to define today what do we mean by being a Christian?

We have to define that because not everything that walks and talks and says, I'm a Christian, is a Christian. It just isn't according to the Word of God. Let's turn to Ephesians chapter 5.

I'm sure you remember I've been trying to get through the book of Ephesians. And we're ready for chapter 5. So I was going to preach out of Matthew, but Matthew 16, I might go to those verses some as well.

But in Ephesians chapter 5, we'll just start going through that chapter. I don't know if we'll get through all of it or not today.

[5 : 00] But before we go there, maybe we'll just turn to Matthew 16, where Jesus said in verse 24, He said, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Jesus talking there, and he's basically saying that if we want to follow Christ, put the tag of Christian, the Christian label on our life, real Christianity, then we will do these things.

We will deny himself, we'll take up our cross, and we'll follow. Three things. Very simple. Deny self, take up the cross, and follow Jesus.

Simple in words, right? But sometimes harder in actions. It's a little hard sometimes to deny that old self. It's hard to take up our cross.

[6 : 27] It's hard to follow when others don't. But that's what it takes to be a Christian. Alright, let's go to Ephesians 5, verse 1. I'm going to need some water, Justin, if you don't mind.

Be therefore followers of God as dear children. We just read what followers of God is, right? We take up our cross if we're a follower of God as dear children.

And walk in love as Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

We heard about love there in the children's class. Thank you. To walk in love. And as Christ has loved us, and if we do this, if we walk in love, we will, according to this verse, we'll smell good.

We'll be pleasant to be around, right? Those around us will smell a very pleasant aroma. I've heard a message years ago about the aroma of Christ coming through our life.

[7 : 48] The aroma of Christ. Who wants to smell something bad and be around a person for a long time that has a very bad smell? Well, I know this might be a little off on the subject a little bit, but this past week we were at a big place with lots of people and my boys and I.

And as we walked through the building, it was like a lot of professional people and a lot of, you know, I believe a lot of Christians as well. But a few times we got to a booth or to a certain place and it's like, wow, it doesn't smell good here.

We need to move on. Wow. We forgot to shower or something. And this is just on a side note, but I believe as Christians, it's good to be presentable.

It's good to be combed and kempt and, you know, like orderly and clean and have a good fragrance. I'm talking physically.

I think it's good and right as much as possible. Obviously, when you're out working and sweating away, it's not going to be so pleasant always. But when we are around like a place like we were at, you wouldn't expect to have to like turn up your nose, right?

[9 : 08] It's hard to buy something from a person that doesn't smell good. I'm just going to be honest. And sometimes, yeah, we can't always help that. But I'm just going to throw that out for what it is.

I think God's people should be clean as much as possible. But how much more, and this is what this verse is talking about, and the reason, let me just finish that thought.

Why clean? Why does it even matter? Why look dressed up or at least, you know, presentable? And I think we do a good job of that here.

I'm not saying, but why is it? It's because we are promoting Christ. You know, we're promoting, we're representative of a heavenly kingdom.

And when we go to those and we present the gospel, I think it's important that we are our best. And, you know, as much as is possible.

[10 : 10] But how much more, you know, if our attitude is wrong? If my attitude is, I'm better than you, or my attitude is, yeah, just self-righteous, or whatever the attitude might be, that's not right.

Is there a sweetness coming out? Paul is instructing us here that there's a sweet aroma of Jesus coming out of our speech, our attitude, our demeanor.

Is it a reflection of Jesus? And not just in public, but, you know, with our families. That's where it really counts, isn't it?

And that's where the challenge really is. Is there an aroma of Jesus in my home? And in the people I'm talking with, it can be on the phone, it can be around our friends, our family, wherever.

But is there that sweetness? That sweet-smelling savor? It's amazing that Paul used those words. Here's the opposite of that.

[11 : 27] Look in verse 3. The opposite of a sweet spirit. But fornication and uncleanness or covetousness, let it not once be named among you as becometh saints.

He goes on, he says, neither filthiness nor foolish talking nor jesting, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.

That word not convenient, I believe, just means not appropriate. It's not appropriate for the Christian. The foolish talking, the jesting or joking, the filthiness.

We know, right? We know. We know what those things are and those unclean things. And it also mentions covetousness. So if we have that coveting spirit in our heart, these are opposite of a sweet-smelling savor.

Right? It's an opposite spirit. It clashes. You can't represent Christ while you're doing these things. It just doesn't. That's not who Christ is.

[12:45] And then he says, For this we know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

No part in the kingdom. Paul's saying, no, we know this. This is how it is. I mean, it's black and white. If this is who the person is, then, yeah, you can say he's a Christian or she.

But the Bible says, no inheritance, no part. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Now we're going to, yeah, switch a little bit from the good smelling savor that we read about, you know, and it looks maybe like we're going to pivot a little bit from that.

But there's many people that will have vain words, trying to convince us that sin, after all, isn't that bad. Sin is not that bad.

[13:55] And that God will accept an unchanged person just the way He is, without changing. In fact, that's a popular message.

But we will have, according to the Bible, we will have no part in the kingdom unless we are changed, unless we are transformed. We know this. The Bible is very clear on this.

And people will still say, but that you can still be disobedient to God in many areas of your life, and He will accept you because God loves everybody.

Isn't that a popular message? God just loves everybody, and obedience isn't that important to His Word. You know, I had a good friend from many years ago that I met recently.

I know it's hard to say these things sometimes when you're being recorded, but I'll say it anyway.

But good friends that I believe, looking at their life and what I've seen and heard lately and in my own communication with them, that they did one small disobedient act at a time.

[15:36] And that's how it goes. I remember Manny used to say, Brother Manny used to say that, you know, the devil won't necessarily ask you for a dollar, but he has no problem asking you for 20 nickels.

You know? It's the same thing, right? But it's more deceiving because it's just a little bit. So just a little area in my life I will not obey God.

Just a little area is not important. And you do that long enough, and then in my conversation here, I was actually just listening in to a conversation at a table, at a wedding.

And unfortunately, these young men across the table from us were asking sincere questions to this man and from the same background, but miles apart.

One was religious and the other was the other, right? And so, where do you go to church? Well, we don't go to church anymore. It's just a soup out there, and so we don't go to church.

[16:52] Or very seldom. If we do, we have a place we can go or something like that. And I just thought, wow, interesting. This man used to challenge me about being a witness for Christ and that I shouldn't leave the religion that I was in so that I can be a witness for them.

And I just thought, wow, one disobedient act at a time until now you're there where you don't even have fellowship or at least not that I know of. You know, maybe just with the whole world.

I'm not sure how it is, and I'm not going to judge their soul. But as far as how do you get to a place like that is one little thing at a time usually. And I'm not talking about disobedience to your false religion.

I'm talking about disobedience to the Word of God that we understand clearly what it says and what it means and we don't care. That's what I'm talking about. Sometimes if our religion that we're in is wrong, we have to disobey that religion.

Right? If it's wrong, we have to disobey. But we're not talking about that. We're talking about the Bible. I want to be clear on that.

[18 : 16] Okay, where were we? Verse 7, I think. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. Don't be partakers of these people that God says He will have a wrath on.

God's wrath will come upon the children of disobedience, the people that are disobedient to the Word of God. And then Paul says, don't take part of that.

Sometimes we have to walk away from it. We need to mind the Spirit in that. Verse 8 says, For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the world.

Walk as children of light. Jesus said also that we are the light of the world. He is the light of the world, but so are we His followers.

Are we a true light? Or are we trying to blend in with the world? I just wrote this down. If we're blending, we're not shining.

[19 : 28] Remember that. If we're blending, we're not shining. Blending doesn't shine. Yes. we do not become saved to blend, but to shine.

We're supposed to be peculiar people, people that are different, that stand out. Is your appetite the same as the rest of the world?

What feeds us? What makes us hungry? Jesus said, blessed are those that hunger and thirst after what? Righteousness.

Not the things that are, the world's not looking for righteousness. They're not hungering after that. Brother Dan said something about, at the end there, about eating at the king's table.

Are we eating at the king's table? Are we that hungry for the things of God? Verse 9 says, For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

[20 : 43] Does my life prove what is acceptable to God and what is not? Does our life prove that, the way we live?

Do my words prove that? my actions prove that. The next verse is one I want to spend a little time on. Verse 11, And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. And then I had this thought, When we fellowship, we will not reprove. which is it? Do we stand at odds?

And I'm just, I'm talking about, you know, the sin of the world and the things that we face. You know, at our workplace, and many of our workplaces probably, we face, many times we face or we talk to people that are sinful.

sometimes worse than other times, but there's so much sin out there and men that will joke about sinful things and things that we are not able to fellowship with, right?

[22 : 10] It says we don't have that fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. I highlighted that because when we fellowship, we will not reprove, right?

When we become part of something, somebody makes a really bad joke and we just really think it's hilarious and we laugh, or we become part of it, right?

You know what I'm talking about. You're not reprovng it. We're not going to reprove that because we've become part of it. I looked up that word in Webster, reprove.

What exactly does it mean? And the Webster says, to charge with a fault, to face, to chide, to reprehend.

And then the verse it gave was Luke 3.19 where John, the Baptist, he reprovved Herod, the king. He reprovved him.

[23 : 13] He said, it's not right that you have his wife. Now, well, we'll come back to that later. It says, to blame for, and then as to reprove one of laziness, speaking against wrong and evil, to convince of a fault, or to make it manifest, to refute, to disprove, to refute something, or disprove.

Like you have a disapproval, right? When our child does something wrong, we disapprove of what they just did, right? That's what it means. To excite a sense of guilt, the heart or conscience reprovves us.

Our conscience and our heart should reprove us, right? I'll read the next few verses. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

This is still talking about not having fellowship of these things. But all things that are reprovved are made manifest by the light. That's the purpose of reprovng, is to shine a light on, to make it manifest.

For whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

[24 : 48] See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Yes, the day that we live in today, if it was evil then in Paul's day, what do you think about today?

Aren't we in evil times? I mean, you just think about our nation and some of the things that, you know, I'm hoping we get the right president this year.

I'm sure you are too. You know what I mean, but regardless of who is president, we are in evil days. Our nation is evil. the killing of babies, the fighting, and where the people stand on those issues is just mind-boggling.

It's amazing. Just think of one thing like abortion, that over half of Americans want it, or some level of it. That's evil.

[25 : 56] We're in evil times. And not only that, I mean, just the corruption of the whole sex change and things like that.

We're in an evil day. The Bible tells us to redeem the time or make good use of the time because the days are evil. You think of what's happening in Israel and all that and how things are just blowing up over there.

It's an evil day for them. I'm going to give you an example of a reproving. I just remember many years ago, probably 25 years, if not more, sitting under a message, an evangelist, a friend of mine actually in Ohio.

And I remember him sharing, I don't know if it was with me personally or in his message, but he was a very bold man, but a very, very compassionate man. He was also very passionate about the gospel and still is to this day.

But I remember him one time saying this thing, he was preaching, I think he was preaching about reproving wickedness around us, and he was standing in line at a gas station, and a man comes through the door and needed to go through the line and excuse him, he had to step out of the way or something, and he had a dolly cart full of bad magazines.

[27 : 32] And something just inside him just made him say something. And he challenged him about giving an account for every man that he was part of causing to lust.

He talked to the man about it, he reproved him. Now I don't know, you might think, well that's weird, you know, we shouldn't do things like that, that could cause trouble.

But I was thinking about that this morning, as that man was there stocking those shelves, and the next dolly cart he took to the next gas station, and on and on, if those words might have been ringing in his ears, I will give an account for every man that I caused to stumble.

God shined his light on that man right at that moment. And I believe we need to mind the spirit in these things, in this matter, and we need to be careful and not just be out there to try to lift ourselves up or anything like that, but I think that Christianity has become very weak, and we've become so timid that we're so scared to say anything about evil.

It wasn't like that in the Bible, the disciples weren't like that. we'll see in a little bit what Paul did and what he prayed for. Not doing things like that for the wrong reason or in the flesh, but when God prompts us to say something, then we need to speak.

[29 : 11] How do we know that God is not trying to speak to that individual? God is saying, and he wants to use your mouth, but he can't because we're too afraid.

We refuse. We're too worried about our own image many times. How will it make me look? I don't want to make a fool out of myself, but listen.

Well, just look at the disciples and what they did. They turned the world upside down, it says, and it was because of what they were saying. They were calling men to repentance.

We don't want to stand out in a crowd. We just want to kind of, you know, not make a scene. And, you know, like I said, I realize that these things can be done in the flesh to make a scene.

It's not what we're talking about. But if God prompts us, and we have the opportunity, I think many times we fail those, we fail God in that. Yes, God's servants in the past must have been a little weird at times, you know, according to culture.

[30 : 30] Do you think John, John the Baptist, do you think he might have had a family member that warned him to not be so bold? Don't talk bad about the king. But he did it anyway.

He told him the truth. And it cost him his head. The disciples, they were told to shut up. They'll let him go, but be quiet.

Do not preach. We forbid you to preach about Jesus. And their answer was, we must obey God rather than man, knowing that they might be thrown right back into jail.

many of them died because of it. But today Christianity has become, or most, much of Christianity has become very weak in these areas.

When it comes to taking a stand, now let's talk about that for a little bit. People, most people, and the devil, don't care when we stand for something, but once you stand against something, I will tell you that all of hell will scream against you.

[31 : 52] I don't care that we stand for certain things as long as you're just doing it in your life. But if you're going to preach that this is the word of God and the truth, and you need to look at this, Tim, you need to repent, that's a different story.

When we stand against something, like I would tell you, no, that's sin what you're doing. I mean, try that. It's when we stand against things is when we have a problem.

It will bring a separation. You have no authority to say that. If you want to do it, then you go be quiet and do it yourself.

You live that way, but don't tell me how to live. Right? Brother Phil preached on that in one of our ministers' meetings.

I forget what scripture he was using, but when he came across that, I realized that, wow, that is true. That is so true. People don't care if I do it for myself, but don't proclaim it as God's truth, because then that affects me.

[33 : 04] Think about Joseph. Think about what happened to Joseph when he withstood evil. He stood against evil.

You know, no one in the whole world would have known the difference or cared what Joseph's decision was. Young men, just think about that. He was alone.

As far as the world was concerned, he had left his country, he had no relatives, nobody, anywhere close. He was in an evil environment, but he knew that his God cared.

He remembered who he was. He remembered that he was called out. He remembered and he stood.

And we read that story today over and over, thousands of people, hundreds of years, centuries. We still read the Joseph story. Had he disobeyed that time, we probably wouldn't even read about him.

[34 : 12] But God used that man in a mighty way. Think about Daniel and his friends, how they stood, the amazing stands they took.

I thought we should look into that and just read about them and what all was offered to them from the king's table. They were supposed to bow down.

Nobody there to watch. They'd have blended right in. There'd be no issue. They were from another country, yes, but it would have been so easy.

There was no dad. There was no uncles, no preachers, nobody to tell them that they shouldn't do it. The only thing they had against them is that if they don't do it, they're going to be thrown into the fiery furnace.

But they remembered who they were. They remembered their God and what they were taught. We are in a place like that today in our nation.

[35 : 22] God and may the church remember who we are. But no, we're not part of this world. They stood, even if it cost the fiery furnace, even if I'll be thrown into a den of hungry lions, roaring lions.

I'll pray. I'm not going to quit praying to my God. Daniel, you know, he could have just at least leave the window closed. Ever think about that?

I remember as a little boy reading that story, why didn't he close his window? Because he wasn't before and he wasn't going to do it for anybody else. Just do it secretly.

Just don't pray, you know, in front of people. But no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, Job, he stood even against the counsel of his own wife.

Now, let's move on here. In the next verse, or no, I'm sorry. Let's see, we're ready for verse 17, I think.

[36 : 35] In the next chapter, actually, in chapter 6, verse 19, I'm just going to read a little bit there where Paul actually prays for this kind of a boldness.

he says, and for me, talking about prayer, that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak.

He's praying this, he's asking the church to pray for him in this, while he's in bonds, that he wouldn't lose that boldness. Earlier in the message here, we were talking about the sweetness coming out of us, a sweet smelling savor.

did Paul, Peter, John the Baptist, or our Lord Jesus not have that sweet smelling savor in some of the things they said?

did? And we know the answer, of course they did. But because they did, they also cared enough about those that lived in the danger zone or in sinfulness.

[37 : 57] They cared enough about people to also tell them the truth, to warn them of God's wrath.

They warned all men to repent. And I believe that we can have both. That we can warn people in a loving way, in a pleading way, if you will, to get right with God, to not do those evil deeds, if God calls us to do that.

Sometimes it might just be correcting our brother, our sister, challenging your dad.

I know my children do, fairly frequently. They'll challenge me if I have a bad attitude or something.

Sometimes it's those things.

Just a challenge. Just a challenge. God's love. But when should we speak? When should we speak to people? Number one would be, I believe, when we sense someone is open to the gospel.

[39 : 22] How many times do Christians miss the opportunity to witness? Somebody was open to the gospel. They might even have said something that you know they were open to the gospel.

But I just wasn't ready. I just had a bad day. The last hour was bad. And I don't feel like witnessing. I don't feel like going any deeper in this.

But they just shared something that indicates to you that they were very open. They would have loved to hear more. God. That's a number one.

When somebody is open. And what about when we sense somebody is hardened and evil and not open to the gospel but maybe just needs to be warned so that they become open.

Just need a little warning. You know, maybe just, I'm not talking about preaching a sermon to people. I'm just like, maybe just saying something before you walk away. I know I've done that at gas stations and places where maybe a young man was smoking and I know it embarrasses my children but just, you know, that's a bad habit.

[40 : 36] Did you know that? Our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost for God to live in and that's a bad habit. Whatever. I'm just saying, if we have opportunities and I think we need the wisdom of God in that.

I'm not saying that every time. that it's always just being out there and just whatever. I think you understand what I'm saying, but when God lays it on your heart and there's the opportunity right in front of you and the church is just silent.

second Corinthians 5 10 says, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad.

Verse 11, knowing therefore, this is coming from Paul I believe, but I believe this is where the disciples and the apostles were, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

But we are made manifest unto God and I trust also are made manifest in your conscience. but they had a fear of God, a reverence of God and a holy God.

[42 : 08] They had that so instilled in their heart that they would warn people of the terror of the Lord, the judgment to come. Why?

Because they loved God, number one. But they knew that God had a wrath and that today is the day of salvation. Today is the day of mercy. Back to Ephesians.

We'll keep going here a little bit. Ephesians 5 there, verse 17. Wherefore, be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Right there it is. Even in this thing of being reproofing the world, if you will, that we need to be not unwise, but understanding what the Lord's will is.

Right there is a good verse. Oh, to walk in His will. Verse 18, another key verse. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.

[43 : 11] I believe that be filled with the Spirit is a command. It's an instruction for us today. That we walk in the Spirit. And these verses all flow together.

Verse 19, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. So if I'm not doing these things and I'm not speaking to myself, I'm

not being encouraged or strengthened in the Lord, and there's an opportunity to witness to somebody, but I've just been evil myself.

I've just been listening to bad stuff, or watching bad stuff, or just having bad thoughts even, and there's the opportunity to witness to a lost soul.

There's a big difference whether we're this or whether we're that. Christian people today are too much that, and they're not this.

For we are being edified. David encouraged his heart in the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[44 : 27] Are we thankful? Are we a thankful people? Are we singing the praises of God? You know, I think if we would be more that, more of this, you know, then I think God could use us more.

We'd be more effective tools in His hand. And it's not just reproving. I want to make that clear. It's not just being out there reproving the evil and shouting at the evil, but with a solution, an answer, the gospel.

Jesus. Jesus will save you. This is what Jesus, I used to be this too, but God saved me from those things. Giving people hope.

Verse 21, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. I take this as being humble, being humble to each other. A high-minded person cannot do this.

If we're not humble, if we're proud, we will only complain and make excuses why I don't need accountability. I don't need to submit to you because after all, you're not that great either.

[45 : 41] You know, your life, and we just make excuses. You know what I'm saying? But when we're humble, we have a humility, the humility of God in our hearts, then we will esteem our brother higher than ourselves.

And we're able to submit one to another like this verse says. We might even make excuses. Well, the church isn't all that spiritual. It's not doing that great.

What's that going to help? Me submitting to somebody else. Then he goes on. He says, Wives, submit unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. In the Lord.

Verse 23, For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and is the Savior of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Now, we know in Corinthians 11, where we read, where we typically would go for this subject, we read first about the husband being submitted to his authority.

[46 : 55] And outside of that, I think I taught on this here a few months ago, but outside of that submission, then we have no authority.

We have nothing to submit to. It is impossible for my wife to fully submit to me when I'm not fully submitted to Christ.

She can't obey God and me at the same time at that point. Does that make sense? Does that make sense? Does that make sense? It is so important.

Verse 25, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies, that he that loveth his wife loveth himself, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.

[48 : 12] So men, do our wives know that we love them more than ourselves? They will know by how we live our lives, right?

Do we ever go back and think about our marriage vows? Recently, there's a thing going on that's very, very unfortunate, where some men, some young married men decided it was a good idea to have more than one wife.

And, yeah, it's a long story. I'm not sure why I'm going there other than to say that it reminded me to think of our vows.

In our vows, we said that we will keep ourselves only for her for as long as we both shall live, and vice versa, the woman.

We said that we will care for her, we'll provide and take care, and and I don't have the vows with me that we usually use, but usually when our children get married, I memorize it, and then I forget it again for a couple years.

[49 : 32] Might have to memorize it again soon, I have no idea, but... Anyway, our vows are important, and we are going to be accountable to God for those vows.

It's not okay to change them later. He goes on, he says, for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Just a note on that, as far as verse 27, that he might, Jesus, present it to himself, a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

I just wanted to say, that's the church Jesus is coming back for. It's going to be a church that isn't all spotted with the world and has all any such things on their garment.

He's coming back for a glorious, pure church, without blemish, that it should be holy. And that is only going to be if us as individuals are that.

[50 : 45] You can't go to a church and walk into a door and say, now I'm in a holy church that God is coming back for. No. If it didn't happen in your life and in my life, and we're not individuals that are walking that way without blemish and in holiness, then we're not, the door we walk in in the church building isn't going to help us a bit.

The church is made up of individuals. Verse 31, For this cause shall man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife. The two shall be one flesh. This is God's plan for marriage and for continuing the cycle of families.

That a man will leave his father and mother. That is establishing his own authority. under God. And now his wife submits to him because it's their own home, their own authority.

And I know as fathers, especially when we raise daughters, it's really hard to let them go and to just say, okay. But we were at a wedding the other week and the father of the daughter said that, kind of choked up, but he said that today we release her into your care.

And I trust you to take good care of her. But dad said that, and I thought that was beautiful. It was a giving over. It's a giving away.

[52 : 22] Because she is no longer under his authority. There's a transfer of authority. And we as parents, even though it hurts, we need to let that go. this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband. This is the only order that will work for a godly and a beautiful marriage, beautiful home.

There is no other plan. I know here in America we've come up with all kinds of ideas and plans and how this can work, and we'll just be equal. We won't have any kind of headship order.

We'll just, you know, you're your life and you do your thing, keep your checking account. Not saying that couldn't maybe work, even though I don't understand it.

But where we don't want to do God's order. In other words, we come up with our own plan. You chase your career, do your thing, have your friends, I'll do what I want and have my friends.

[53 : 33] And there's something about the lack of oneness in that. The lack of being one. Just to close here, I just want to talk a little bit about or end with the commitment.

As we continue on in this Christian journey, one of the biggest things that Christians lack today also is commitment. remember who we are.

Those Hebrews, those Jewish children that we were mentioning there, the Hebrew boys, they remembered in a strange land, they remembered who they are.

We are in a strange land. This is not our home. We're just pilgrims passing through. And we're supposed to be ambassadors while we're here for another land, another kingdom, our long-term home that we're planning to go to.

Right, Chuck? That's where we want to go. So what's our commitment? Do we remember whose we are and where we belong?

[54 : 45] Some people will take all measures to try to stand out and be peculiar and maybe dress a certain way, just a certain particular way and say, we are different from the world.

We're a different people. But if the heart inside is the same, you're not different.

You just look different. We can dress however we want to be different from the rest of the world. But if our heart is not changed and been transformed by the light of Jesus with a new heart, a born-again heart, then we are just as much a part of the world as the rest of the world.

We know that. We've experienced that. We've seen that. But yet we are called to be peculiar. And the difference is the things we're talking about in Ephesians.

The difference is that we do care about the Word of God. We do desire to be obedient in all things to the Word of God. Because God has given us a new heart.

[56 : 02] So let's not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage of religious ideas or what the world is screaming at us.

What is acceptable to God when it's not true. Will we be one of those? Will we be a David or a Joseph or a Daniel and be willing to stand or a John or a Peter?

Be willing to say what needs saying no matter what the consequences. Are we willing to be a bold Christian and disliked if God calls us to that?

Or are we going to care too much about ourself? The bottom line is Jesus said to take up our cross and follow Him. That means what I feel and what I care about myself is secondary.

needs to be laid down. And that's a hard calling. But it's a sure calling and it's a glorious calling.

[57 : 18] With great rewards in the end. Why don't we pray? Father, we come to You at this time, Lord. We just thank You for Your Word.

Thank You for the book of Ephesians that Paul wrote. So many years ago that we can glean from and learn from and Your own words that to be a follower of Christ, that we will deny ourselves and take up our cross and that we will follow You like we heard a number of Sundays ago about You being our leader and that we follow You.

Lord, we thank You for that. Thank You for the privilege and the honor of having You as our shepherd. Your Word promises us that we will know our shepherd's voice.

I just pray for each one here this morning, including myself, that our commitment to You would go deeper than before. Lord, that we would remember whose we are, where we belong, in the kingdom, in the family of God, and not of this world.

May those appetites of the world become strangely dim, and may we go forward in just hunger and thirst after righteousness, spending time with You and seeking You, Lord, and seeking Your face to know Your will, to be filled with Your Spirit in the midst of a crazy, upside-down world, Lord.

[58 : 54] Lord, just help us to be Your servants, to be Your vessels, to be honest with You, to be honest with where we're at. Help us, Lord, and give us mercy.

Lord, forgive us where we failed You in this. Forgive me, Lord, for sometimes having had the wrong attitude and the wrong approach and those kind of things, Lord.

But I pray, God, that You would make those things right in our hearts, and that You would help us. Help us to see what You see, Lord. Help us to have a burden for the loss.

Oh, God, a church with no burden for the loss doesn't go far. Lord, I just pray You would bring that burden to us, and that we would seek You in how we can be effective soul winners for Your kingdom.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.